SWAHILI

> **Paper 0262/01**
> **Reading and Writing**

Key messages

In the reading exercises candidates are:

- expected not only to understand the information provided in the passage/text but also to be able to distinguish between facts, ideas and opinions
- required to demonstrate the ability to extract relevant information from various types of text and organise and present it in the required format.

In the writing exercises candidates should:

- ensure that answers fulfil the task requirements
- develop ideas by using an appropriate register and format
- use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary
- apply writing conventions, such as paragraphs and punctuation, appropriately.

General comments

- Candidates are advised to expand their vocabulary to increase text comprehension as well as improve productive use of Swahili.
- In **Exercises 1**, **2** and **3**, the emphasis is on reading skills, and minor spelling errors are tolerated in **Exercises 1** and **3** provided they do not interfere with communicating the correct answer.
- In **Exercise 3**, candidates may write in note-form, as long as all the required information is covered.
- In **Exercises 4**, **5** and **6**, marks are awarded for content and language accuracy. Therefore, it is important that candidates carefully check their work for spelling and grammatical errors.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Candidates read a short text on *miti ya mibuyu* and responded to a series of questions testing their skim-reading and gist-reading skills. The exercise required short answers of a single word or phrase.

The most challenging questions proved to be **Question 5** and **7**, particularly **Question 5**. The operative words in this question were *'umuhimu'* and *'kijadi'*, which linked with *'katika historia ya utamaduni wetu,* **thamani** *yake* **hasa** *imetokana na uwezo wa mibuyu kuishi kwa maelfu ya miaka'* in the text. Candidates who responded with *'kuhifadhi maelfu ya lita za maji'* missed the fact that the question asked for the traditional, as opposed to the practical, importance.

To respond to **Question 7**, candidates needed to know the word *'kikwazo'* (obstacle). Some candidates who did not understand this word responded with *'huboresha maisha'* or *'huboresha matibabu'*. **Question 6** required candidates to know the meaning of the word *'malazi'* (habitat), which some did not.

An important takeaway from the performance in this exercise is that candidates need to work on expanding their vocabulary. It should also be remembered that candidates must find the answers within the passage and not respond based on information outside the text.

Exercise 2

Most of the candidates performed well, although some made mistakes in choosing the correct answers in this multiple-choice exercise.

This year the texts were about cooking.

The most challenging question was **Question 15**. Candidates needed to look carefully at the tense used to respond accurately here. It was Speaker D (Farhiya) who said *'mwaka ujao **nitaanzisha** blogu ya mapishi'* to indicate that this will happen in the future.

Candidates also needed to read the questions carefully to take note of key words, such as *'hasi'* in **Question 10** and *'uelewa'* in **Question 12**, to answer correctly.

Exercise 3

This session the topic of the reading text was *mapambo ya mazingira asilia*.

Most candidates were able to get the marks for **Question 18** which asked for drawbacks.

In response to **Question 17**, candidates needed to specify how parents had influenced their children rather than state actions taken by the children. Some candidates found this challenging.

Question 19 was generally answered better than **Question 17**.

Exercise 4

This question was generally done quite well. Candidates were expected to summarise the benefits and disadvantages of traditional décor based on the text. The question did not look for candidates' general knowledge on the topic. At the same time, candidates were expected to use their own language and not copy from the text, which some weaker answers struggled to achieve.

As four marks were available for content, two benefits and two disadvantages were sufficient for a balanced answer to the question. Some answers focused on either benefits or disadvantages, thus proving to be weaker summaries of the text as a whole.

Exercise 5

Candidates were asked to write about a festival they attended recently. The points they were asked to write on were: the type of festival (*aina ya tamasha*), activities done (*shughuli ulizofanya*) and challenges faced at the festival (*changamoto za kuhudhuria tamasha*).

Many candidates did not know the term *'tamasha'* (festival) and took it to mean various things, including *'mitihani'* (exams), *'masimulizi'* (narration) and '*matatizo*' (problems). Examiners accepted any reasonable interpretations of the term *tamasha* but candidates who knew its proper meaning usually did best.

As a rule of thumb, candidates should cover each bullet point in a couple of sentences and keep in mind that examiners are looking at the content, language and structure of the response, including the use of paragraphs, punctuation and sequencing of ideas.

Exercise 6

This year candidates were asked to engage with the following statement: '*Lazima sote tuanze kula mboga tu na kuacha nyama*'. The two statements in the speech bubbles were presented to stimulate candidates further but they should be reminded that they must engage with the main statement and offer their own ideas and opinions on it as well.

Generally, candidates must keep the following in mind:

- Maintain relevance to the main statement and provide your own ideas, opinions and arguments
- Avoid word separation errors, e.g. with verbs
- Avoid repeating ideas and arguments – planning the response before writing will help with this
- Use paragraphs and punctuate properly
- Use correct adjective agreements.
- Use a variety of grammar (including relative markers).

SWAHILI

<div style="border:1px solid black">

Paper 0262/02
Listening

</div>

Key messages

Candidates should:

- listen carefully to identify the specific information needed to answer each question
- read the instructions and questions with care throughout the paper and if a question consists of more than one part, be careful to respond to all of them
- always attempt an answer rather than leaving a blank space as the paper is not marked negatively.

General comments

1. In general there was a very good performance in this listening paper, comparable to the 2023 paper.

2. In **Exercise 1,** it is very important that answers are short, specific and unambiguous. There was a tendency for some candidates to give two or more possible answers to a single question, thereby invalidating their answer. Candidates should be encouraged to be decisive in picking a single answer to each question.

3. In comparison to the 2023 paper, there were fewer omitted answers across this year's paper, and most noticeably a decrease in omitted answers in **Exercises 1** and **2**. This suggests that candidates have been well prepared by their centres, and have recognised the importance of always attempting a response to every question, even where they may struggle to identify the correct answer. Candidates and centres are to be commended on this effort, and this message should continue to be reinforced.

4. In **Exercises 1 and 2**, candidates should be careful to read the question fully and note the specific prompt words used; this will help them to narrow down possible answers and will help ensure that their response meets the exact demands of the question.

5. There was a very good performance in the multiple-matching and multiple-choice questions in **Exercises 3** and **4**, continuing the strong general performance from 2023. Very few candidates omitted to answer the multiple-choice questions, which is excellent to see.

6. In all exercises of the paper, care should be taken to consider the entirety of the spoken text in order to correctly identify the correct answer, and candidates should avoid the temptation to quickly latch onto a familiar or prominent item of vocabulary to the neglect of the rest of the text.

7. Candidates should bear in mind that the correct answer item may occur at any point in the spoken text. Candidates should not assume that the last item/line of text that they hear must be the correct answer. Additionally, candidates should be careful to always take answers from the spoken texts, and not from their general knowledge or common sense. These points are particularly important for the short answer questions in **Exercise 1** and the gap-fill questions in **Exercise 2**.

8. Candidates should always read the question rubrics and instructions carefully, even if they feel very familiar with the paper format. Candidates should always note any sample answers provided in the question rubric and avoid repeating these; this will help candidates to narrow down the possible correct answers in the text. Answers to the multiple-matching and multiple-choice **Exercises 3** and **4** should clearly conform to the instructions given in the question paper.

- Centres and candidates should be commended on a generally strong performance in this paper. Candidates were generally well prepared for the specific requirements of each exercise. Compared to 2023 there is some evidence for a slight improvement in general performance in **Exercise 2**, which can be a fairly challenging exercise. Overall, the strongest candidates performed particularly well on the multiple-matching and multiple-choice questions in **Exercises 3** and **4**, while the least able candidates tended to struggle most with **Exercises 2** and **4**.

- In the open response questions, the most successful candidates tended to keep their answers short, clear, and specific. By contrast, some candidates gave overly long or vague responses that failed to indicate their specific choice of answer. Candidates should be decisive when picking an answer to a question, and should resist the urge to hedge their bets by giving more than one answer, This tendency was, once again, noticeable in **Exercise 1**, and also occurred, to a lesser degree, in **Exercise 2**. Some candidates lost marks by giving multiple answers or by including contradictory additions that invalidated their otherwise correct response. It may be helpful to emphasise this point to candidates when preparing them for next session's paper.

- Once again, it was encouraging to see that many candidates made good use of the opportunity to listen to the spoken text a second time, as shown by the number of initial attempts that were crossed out and replaced with another answer. However, care should be taken to clearly cross out any unwanted answers to avoid losing marks.

- Candidates should ensure that their responses provide a suitable, logical answer to the specific question prompts (e.g. a question asking about *shughuli* should be answered with reference to actions or activities, rather than objects or single noun answers). For the same reason, the transcription of entire lines of text is likely to result in an incorrect answer. Where candidates have sufficient time, it may be useful to read back on the question prompt and their answer <u>as a whole</u> to ensure that their response is logical and specific to the question prompt.

- Candidates should be careful to read the question rubrics and instructions thoroughly, and not skim over these even where they feel familiar with the paper format. Particularly in **Exercise 2**, candidates should always pay attention to the sample answer given before the questions, as doing so can help candidates eliminate those items as possible answers to subsequent questions.

- In **Exercises 3** and **4**, some candidates' answers did not conform to the instructions given in the question paper. Candidates should be careful in **Exercise 3** to only use each answer letter (A – G) once, and in **Exercise 4** to tick only one answer box for each question, to use ticks rather than letters, and to clearly strike through any first attempts they do not want to be marked.

- In comparison to previous years, there appeared to be an improvement in candidates' correct selection of answers regardless of chronological order in the text. Candidates appear to have realised that fixating on either the first or last possible answer that they hear chronologically may be misleading. Candidates are encouraged to continue to avoid the assumption that the first or last item they hear in the text must be the correct one.

- The multiple-matching and multiple-choice questions in **Exercise 3** and **Exercise 4** may require candidates to make more inferences or show understanding of the underlying meaning of the spoken text as a whole, in line with assessment Objectives L3 and L4[1]. Candidates who performed less well in these exercises should pay close attention to the nuance of different speakers' ideas or feelings.

<u>Comments on specific questions</u>

Exercise 1

- Most candidates performed well across the eight questions in this exercise, and the general performance was very comparable to the 2023 paper. Candidates performed strongly on **Questions 3** and **7** in particular.

- The use of the word *mpwa* in **Question 1** caused some difficulty, and it appears that many candidates were unfamiliar with this term. It was frequently mistaken for *mbwa* or *mkwe*. Candidates may wish to familiarise themselves with the vocabulary of familial relationships in preparation for future papers.

- There is evidence of a slight overall decrease this year in omitted answers in this exercise, which is excellent to see. However, many candidates found **Question 6** of this exercise quite challenging, particularly the least able cohort of candidates, with perhaps not sufficient attention paid to the different possible answer options to the specific 'where' aspect of the question.

---

[1] L3: *show understanding of the connections between ideas, opinions and attitudes.*
  L4: *understand what is implied but not directly stated, e.g. gist, speaker's purpose, intention and feelings.*

Exercise 2

- General performance on this exercise was good, although, continuing a trend from previous years, this exercise proved the most challenging to candidates overall. As such, it showed very clear differentiation of the best performing candidates from the rest.

- In general, overall performance was strongest on **Questions 9(b)** and **9(d)**, although this situation was reversed for the least able cohort of candidates, as shown by the high omitted answer rate amongst this cohort and the high level of differentiation between the least able cohort and the rest.

- Many candidates, even the best performing ones, found **Question 9 (f)** and **9(g)** more difficult, possibly because these questions required a very close degree of attention to detail to both the wording of the question prompt and the possible answers in the spoken text. These questions show the importance of paying close attention to the wording of question prompts. In this case, heeding the question prompt *shughuli* would have helped candidates to narrow down possible answers and select actions/activities as the correct answer, rather than incorrectly giving single nouns or objects as the answer, or common sense guesses.

- There was a very slight decrease this year in the number of candidates who omitted one or more answers in **Exercise 2**, which is excellent to see. Although this is often a very challenging exercise, it is important to keep encouraging candidates to always attempt an answer to every question, even if all they have is a best guess.

Exercise 3

- General performance on this exercise was very good, and very comparable to the 2023 paper. **Exercise 3** was, once again, a very good differentiator between the highest and lowest performing candidates; it was noticeable how many of the higher-scoring candidates did very well on this question, while the lowest scoring candidates tended to struggle with it. Despite this differentiation, noticeably few candidates omitted answers in this exercise, which is very encouraging to see.

- Performance in **Question 10** could be improved by paying more attention to the sometimes subtle differences between the various ideas, feelings and beliefs expressed in the spoken texts.

- In this exercise, some candidates showed a tendency to focus on recognisable individual items of vocabulary from the possible answers listed in the exam paper, rather than paying enough attention to the overall meaning of the spoken texts.

Exercise 4

- Overall performance in **Exercise 4** was varied, and very comparable to the 2023 paper. Candidates coped very well with the subject matter and with the occurrences of abstract language. Candidates mostly coped well with the good command of vocabulary and idiom required for the questions in this exercise.

- In general, most candidates performed well on **Questions 11**, **14** and **17**. **Question 13** tended to be more challenging to candidates.

- In comparison to previous years, there appears to be a growing tendency for some candidates to fill in the letter of their chosen answer in the box rather than a tick. This should be avoided, as it may lead to ambiguous answers. For example, if a candidate marks the correct answer box but does so with the wrong letter, then the mark cannot be awarded. Candidates are encouraged to only use ticks when marking these answer boxes.

- The strong performance throughout the whole of **Exercise 4**, and the extremely low degree of omitted answers, suggests that most candidates had good overall time management during this exercise, including the least able cohort of candidates. It also demonstrates a general ability for candidates to sustain their focus and effort throughout a long listening exercise and relatively demanding text, which is to be commended.

SWAHILI

Paper 0262/03
Speaking

Key messages

To do well in this examination, candidates should:

- choose a topic for the presentation section that incorporates an aspect, or aspects, of life in a Swahili-speaking or East African community or culture
- make sure when preparing the presentation section that a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures are used (e.g., relatives, negatives, subjunctives, varied tenses). This will demonstrate linguistic versatility
- make sure when preparing the presentation section that care is taken to include a range of opinions alongside factual elements. Phrases such as *inavyoonekana, inavyosemekana, kwa maoni yangu, mazoea ya...* may be used to good effect
- seek to engage the examiner in conversation and not feel constrained to answering questions only. When responding to a closed (e.g., 'yes/no') question, candidates should attempt to expand on their answer and demonstrate initiative.

To allow candidates to do well in this examination, examiners should:

- put candidates at ease at the beginning of the examination
- clearly introduce the format at the start of the exam to the candidate and introduce the start of each section during the exam
- stick closely to the timings of each section, so that candidates have a fair chance to respond and expand in each section
- allow candidates enough time to answer questions fully by avoiding interruptions and allowing some time after the candidate finishes speaking to provide the opportunity for them to expand
- ask open-ended questions (e.g., why/how – *kwa nini, kivipi, kwa mawazo yako…itakuwaje*, etc.) rather than closed questions that would normally only require very short responses, (e.g. *Ulienda? Unapenda?*). Asking closed questions may disadvantage especially weaker candidates as it makes more challenging for them to showcase their linguistic ability fully
- keep questions as short and clear as possible, instead of asking questions that require long introductions or a good deal of context. It was noted that some examiners talk more than the candidates; please remember that it is the candidates who are being examined and who primarily need to be heard
- avoid asking the same questions to multiple candidates. Examiners should ask a wide range of spontaneous questions, including follow-up questions, directly related to the individual candidates' presentations, topics, interests, and responses. This will allow candidates to display a wider range of facts and opinions on the topic
- avoid using any English in the exam
- repeat questions if asked to by the candidate.

General comments

- The prescribed timings were inconsistently observed by examiners. Not allowing sufficient time in each section limits the candidate's ability to do well in that section.
- Sections were generally clearly introduced by examiners.
- Most recordings were clear and sufficiently audible.
- Marking tended to be generous in the higher mark range and severe in the lower mark range.
- Exams must be submitted on time to avoid delays.
- Examiners should attempt to get the best out of every student according to their needs rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach.

CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Comments on specific sections

Presentation

Most candidates prepared well for their part of the test.

Candidates scoring the highest marks delivered presentations that were:

- natural and not read out
- developed to a good length
- not simply factual but also containing a wide range of opinions
- wholly relevant
- challenging and thought-provoking
- diverse in terms of vocabulary and grammar.

Some candidates chose topics that were not sufficiently challenging for an examination at this level, such as 'family', 'friends', 'school' and 'daily life' and thus limited themselves in terms of the marks available to them. As this section can be prepared in full it presents candidates with the best opportunity to display their abilities from the outset. Presentations on insufficiently challenging topics often lacked opinions.

Some candidates appeared to read out their presentations from a script. It is important to remember that this is not permitted and that a key performance indicator in the higher bands is for the presentation to be engaging and natural. The importance of style (as well as substance) should be clearly emphasised to candidates.

Some candidates played it safe in the presentation in terms of the range of grammar displayed. Examiners look for a range of tenses and structures, and this section provides the best opportunity for less confident candidates to display an ability to utilise them.

Topic conversation

Most candidates did well in this part of the test and showed a good understanding of the questions they were asked. There were few instances of questions having to be repeated or answers that were irrelevant.

Some candidates struggled to achieve access to the higher marking bands in this section because they could not expand at sufficient length or in sufficient detail on their answers. This was sometimes made harder by examiners moving on too quickly to other questions and not allowing time for candidates to think and develop a more detailed response.

Candidates should avoid repeating material from their presentation in the topic discussion. Some candidates fell back on this and lost the chance to display a wider range of language and topic understanding.

The range of language was often good but there were common grammatical errors, such as:

- with noun class agreements, especially with possessive pronouns and adjectives
- mixing agreements in relative structures
- errors when using monosyllabic verbs
- confusing -*enye* and -*amba* structures
- use of the non-standard -*ag/ang*- habitual suffix/prefix.

General conversation

Candidates generally did well here. Examiners are reminded, however, that:

Questions should span at least one topic from Areas A–B **and** one from Areas C–E. Topics were sometimes chosen from Areas A–B only, which restricted the ability of candidates to achieve higher marks. Examiners should also allow candidates time to expand on each topic, rather than move on quickly to encompass several topics.

It is crucial that topics chosen in this section do not overlap with those discussed in the Presentation and the Topic discussion. On occasion, this was not adhered to, and candidates struggled to achieve higher marks.

A large selection of topics should be covered across candidates within the same centre and genuinely reflect their interests as that will free up potential. The same topics were sometimes used for large numbers of candidates within a centre. This inhibited performance and limited the marks candidates were able to achieve. Examiners should avoid using the same questions for all their candidates as this also limits the potential to achieve higher marks.

For candidates, the same points largely apply in this section as in the previous section. In short, candidates should:

1   seek to expand on their initial answers

2   avoid repeating information from previous sections of the task and always attempt to cover fresh ground

3   use the opportunity to display a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary

4   engage and expand the topic and take it new directions to demonstrate their command of the language.

Candidates are encouraged to engage fully with the examiner. They should ask their own questions and take the conversation in new directions. This section affords the best opportunity to do this and the ability to contribute to the direction of the discussion will always count in a candidate's favour.